

ATTACHMENT 6:

Summary of Recent Published Literature on Low Income Housing
and Parking Requirements

SUMMARY OF RECENT PUBLISHED LITERATURE ON LOW-INCOME HOUSING AND PARKING REQUIREMENTS:

PARKING REQUIREMENT IMPACTS ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

(Written by Todd Litman, 1999)

This paper examined the costs (monetary and environmental) associated with making housing developers provide off-street parking as a condition for a building permit. The paper argues that the costs associated with current parking requirements are ultimately passed down to the consumer in the form of higher rents, which tend to have a greater impact on lower income households. The paper recommends that municipalities develop more flexible parking requirements that take into account household characteristics (market rate vs. affordable), proximity to transit, and density.

Summary of the paper's finding:

FIXED PARKING REQUIREMENTS ARE REGRESSIVE:

- Fixed parking requirements increase the per-unit cost of housing, especially in urban areas. Since parking costs are fixed, low income residents tend to spend a larger portion of their income on the so-called "free parking."
- Low income households tend to own fewer cars and are more likely to pay for parking capacity they do not need.
- Parking requirements result in a smaller supply of affordable housing due to increased development costs.
- Fixed parking requirements lead to less investment in public transportation.

THERE IS AN UNMET MARKET DEMAND FOR HOUSING NEAR TRANSIT STATIONS:

- 12% of U.S. households do not own a motor vehicle (note: According to the 2000 Census, 12.6% of households do not own a vehicle in Los Angeles County. A high concentration of car free households are located near LA County's CBD and along the 110 and Blue Line corridor, see Map 1)
- Households in higher density areas tend to own fewer vehicles than households in lower density areas.
- Litman argues that instituting flexible residential parking requirements will result in residential developments that offer more equitable choices for residents, whereby a family can choose not to own a car and instead redirect the savings toward other more important household needs. Litman also writes, "owning one less vehicle saves a household an estimated \$3,000 annually in vehicle costs and \$50 per month in parking costs." The opportunity costs associated with fixed residential parking requirements include the loss of affordable neighborhood choices for low income residents.

MUNICIPALITIES SHOULD CONSIDER ALL THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH FIXED PARKING REQUIREMENTS:

- Maximum potential density declines as the number of surface parking spaces increases, especially in denser urban areas, where land is scarce and land costs are high.
- Fixed parking requirements contribute to suburban sprawl. Current fixed parking requirements increase land costs per area of developed floor space, making development in the urban periphery more attractive due to lower land costs.
- Fixed residential parking requirements constitute a major incentive for increased automobile use and dependency, resulting in greater external costs such as congestion, accidents and pollution.
- Off-site “free” parking is not free at all. Flexible parking requirements result in the perpetuation of an urban model that is not sustainable.

PARKING REQUIREMENTS GUIDE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPER
(dcrp.ced.berkeley.edu/students/russo/parking.org)

This report recommends that policy makers re-evaluate existing parking requirements and eliminate the “one-size fits all” approach to parking requirements. It provides a summary of “Best Practice Policies,” including the City of Los Angeles’ combined reductions in parking requirements for affordable housing and proximity to transit.

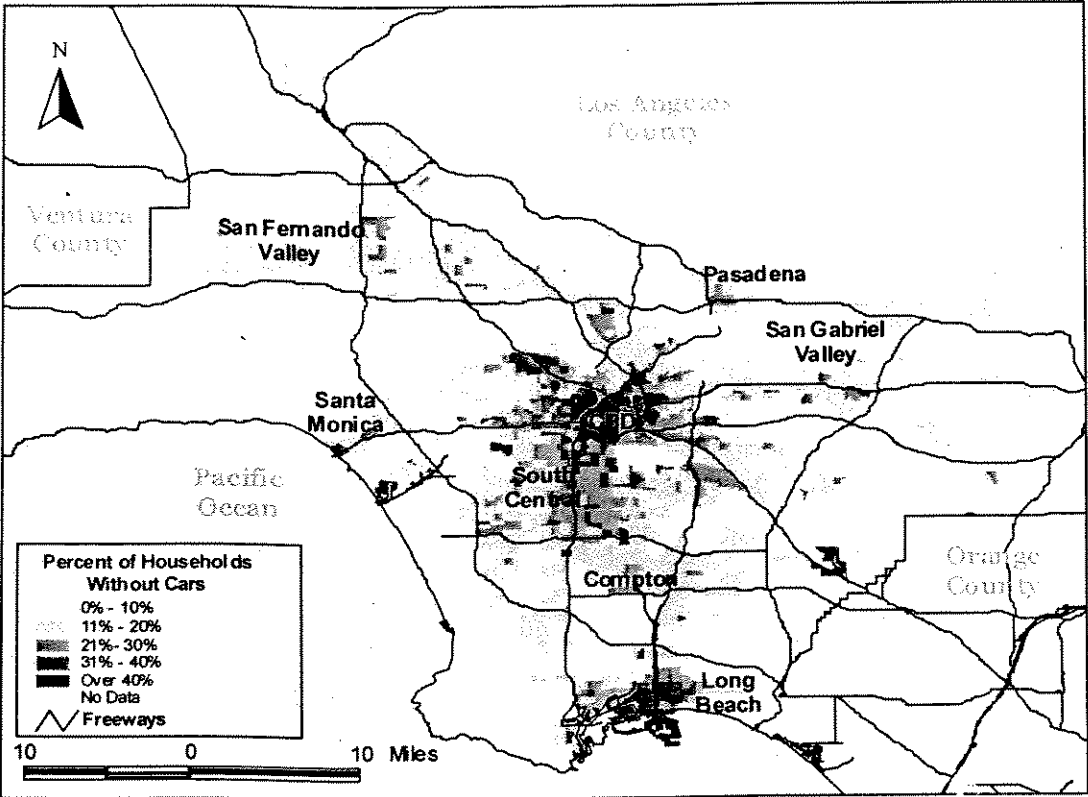
MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT AFFORDABLE AND HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING
(www.abag.net/corporate/depts/cpd/eastside/makeup.htm)

This paper deals with peoples misconceptions about low-cost housing. The paper offers statistical data that shows that low-income households own fewer cars and make less trips than median income households.

UNDERSTANDING AUTOMOBILE OWNERSHIP BEHAVIOR OF LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS
(Written by Allissa Gardenhire, 1999)

This paper evaluates car ownership patterns for low-income households. The paper concludes that income and proximity to transit is directly linked to vehicle ownership in low-income households, more so than median income households. Therefore, as income increases, so does vehicle ownership.

Map 1: Percentage of Households Without Cars



source: 2000 Census